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IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-21 (withdrawn).

22. (Currently amended) An intelligent drug dispensing appliance comprising:
a controller;

a reservoir of pharmaceutical specific to an individual and to be dispensed over time to the individual patient, the pharmaceutical including at least one of individual tablets, liquids, or gasses, to be administered to an individual patient in individual unit doses for direct use by the patient according to a treatment regimen;

a drug delivery mechanism located proximate to the patient at a location remote to a hospital, coupled to, and responsive to the controller and to the reservoir, to controllably dispense the pharmaceutical to the individual patient from the reservoir in a precise amount in response to signals from said controller;

a data network interface coupled to said controller.

23. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 22 including a data network interface that is capable of sending a data message over a data network through said data network interface to at least one of:

a health care service provider;

a pharmaceutical supplier;

said data message from said intelligent drug dispensing appliance identifying the patient for whom said pharmaceutical is required and the identity of the particular medication.

24. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 22 including a data network interface that is capable of receiving a data message over a data network through said data network interface from at least one of:

a health care service provider;

a pharmaceutical supplier;

said data message to said intelligent drug dispensing appliance identifying the patient for whom said pharmaceutical is required and the identity of the particular medication.

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25. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 22 further including a human/display interface.

26. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claims 23 and 24 wherein said data network interface is capable of sending a data message to effect payment for the provision of health care service.

27. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claims 23 and 24 wherein said data network interface is capable of sending a data message to effect payment for the provision of a pharmaceutical.

28. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claims 23 and 24 wherein said data network interface is capable of sending a data message transported via the Internet.

29. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claims 23 and 24 where said data network interface is capable of sending a data message transported via a wireless communication device.

30. (Previously amended) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 22 further including a pharmaceutical level detector, the pharmaceutical level detector configured to ascertain at least one of measured weight of pharmaceutical remaining in the reservoir, decremented amount remaining in the reservoir, depth measurement of pharmaceutical in the reservoir, and static pressure within the reservoir.

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31. (Currently amended) An intelligent drug dispensing system providing replenishment of pharmaceutical medication, said system comprising:

an intelligent drug dispensing appliance, the appliance including a data network interface through which pharmaceutical replenishment request signals can be sent from said intelligent drug dispensing appliance, a controller and a reservoir of pharmaceutical to be dispensed to an individual patient, the pharmaceutical including at least one of individual tablets, liquids, and gasses, to be administered in individual doses according to a treatment regimen for direct use by the patient, wherein the reservoir of pharmaceutical is located proximate to the patient at a non-hospital location;

a pharmaceutical replenishment request data server coupled to said data network to receive medication replenishment request signals from at least one intelligent drug dispensing appliance.

32. (Currently amended) An intelligent drug dispensing system providing replenishment of pharmaceutical medication, said system comprising:

an intelligent drug dispensing appliance, including a data network interface through which pharmaceutical replenishment request signals can be received, a controller and a reservoir of pharmaceutical to be dispensed to an individual patient, the pharmaceutical including at least one of individual tablets, liquids, and gasses, to be administered in precise unit individual doses according to a treatment regimen for direct use by the patient, wherein the reservoir of pharmaceutical is located proximate to the patient at a non-hospital location;

a pharmaceutical replenishment request data server coupled to said data network to send medication replenishment request signals to at least one intelligent drug dispensing appliance.

33. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing system of claims 31 and 32 wherein said pharmaceutical replenishment request data server is comprised of a health care service provider computer, responsive to data messages from a patient of said health care service provider to generate drug refill orders.

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34. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing system of claim 31 and 32 wherein said pharmaceutical replenishment request data server is comprised of a drug supplier computer, responsive to data messages from either a patient or a health care service provider so as to effect shipment of medication to said patient.

35. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing system of claim 31 and 32 wherein said pharmaceutical replenishment request data server is comprised of a insurance provider computer, responsive to data messages from either a patient or a health care service provider so as to approve payment for said medication.

36. (Currently amended) An intelligent drug dispensing system providing automatic replenishment of pharmaceuticals, said system comprising:

a pharmaceutical replenishment request data server operatively coupled to a data network so as to receive pharmaceutical replenishment request messages from at least one intelligent drug dispensing appliance;

wherein the intelligent drug dispensing apparatus includes a controller and a reservoir of pharmaceutical to be dispensed over time to an individual patient in a plurality of discrete unit doses according to a treatment regimen for direct use by the patient, wherein the reservoir is located proximate to the patient at a non-hospital location.

37. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing system of claim 36 wherein said pharmaceutical replenishment request data server is comprised of a health care service provider computer, responsive to data messages sent from a patient of said health care service provider to generate drug refill orders.

38. (Previously amended) The intelligent drug dispensing system of claim 36 wherein said pharmaceutical replenishment request data server is comprised of a pharmaceutical provider computer, responsive to data messages sent from a health care service provider to generate drug refill orders.

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39. (Original) The intelligent drug dispensing system of claim 36 wherein said pharmaceutical replenishment request data server is comprised of a insurance carrier computer, responsive to data messages sent from a health care service provider to generate drug refill orders for a patient.

Claims 40-47 (withdrawn).

48. (Previously presented) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 22 wherein the pharmaceutical is at least one liquid material.

49. (Previously presented) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 48 wherein the drug delivery mechanism includes an ink-jet print head capable of delivering precise amounts of the liquid.

50. (Previously amended) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 49 wherein the controller includes a memory device contained within the appliance.

51. (Previously presented) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 50 wherein the memory device contains at least one treatment regimen regulating dispensing of individual doses of pharmaceutical to the patient.

52. (Previously Amended) The intelligent drug dispensing apparatus of claim 51 wherein the data network interface is adapted to be removably coupled to patient monitoring sensors.

53. (New) An intelligent drug dispensing appliance comprising:
a controller;
a reservoir of pharmaceutical specific to the individual patient to be dispensed over time;
a drug dispensing mechanism, located proximate to the patient at a location remote to a hospital, the drug delivery mechanism coupled to, and responsive to, the controller and to the reservoir to dispense the pharmaceutical to the patient from the reservoir in a precise amount in response to signals from said controller;
a data network interface coupled to said controller.

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54.(New) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 53 wherein the pharmaceutical includes at least one of individual tablets, liquids, or gasses.

55.(New) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 53 further including a human/display interface, the human/display interface including at least one of a tactile input device or a speech recognition device operatively coupled to the controller.

56.(New) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 53 further including at least one sensor operatively coupled to the controller, the sensor capable of providing data signals indicative of the patient's physical condition.

57.(New) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 53 further comprising:

a pharmaceutical depletion guard, the pharmaceutical depletion guard including a pharmaceutical level detector coupled to the processor and the data network interface, wherein the data network interface is capable of sending a message to at least one of a health care provider or pharmaceutical supplier, the data message from the data network interface including at least one of a patient identity, pharmaceutical identity, and treatment regimen.

58.(New) The intelligent drug dispensing appliance of claim 57 wherein the data network interface is capable of sending a data message to effect payment for a service, the service including at least one of the provision of health care and the provision of a pharmaceutical.